



**Van Asselt Community Center
PAT Meeting #5
July 20, 2004
Meeting Notes**

PAT Members Present: Monika Christine Mathews; Ed Rose; Kenneth Yu; Joy Moro; Ed Enstadt; Jenny Chung. **Guests present:** Ron Wright, project architect; Shirley McGibbon (park neighbor on Frontenac Street).

Staff Present: Cheryl Fraser, Parks Southeast Sector Manager; Dan Johnson, Parks Project Manager; Clint Hooper, Community Center Coordinator; Karen Lynch, Parks Public Relations Specialist; Pam Kliment, Parks Planning & Development Specialist.

6:05 p.m. Introductions and Dan's welcome. He reviewed the agenda. The main goal of this meeting was to focus on the interior spaces in the new building, and how to make choices regarding total square footage and the options available. He noted that Parks staff person Pam Kliment was there to speak about small and simple grants, related to the play area.

6:10 p.m. Dan introduced project architect, Ron Wright, noting that Ron and Jorge are working on building designs within the context of Levy language and approved design plan – but are adding a couple of newly-required elements such as an elevator, within the same building.

6:15 p.m. Ron and Dan explained the purpose /structure of the Design Commission (a group appointed by the Mayor's office, of primarily architects) which approves all city design projects. The designs Ron brought to the meeting had been recently reviewed by the commission and commented on.

Ron mentioned "Plan B" for the site itself, which was discussed at the 6/15 PAT meeting.

- He explained why the play area and wading pool will stay where they're currently located. These are considered "fixed" on the property. (Any changes to their locations would have to be dealt with out of the building's budget.)
- Ron showed site change options. Site changes boil down to "money" (we don't have).
- The playfields on the other side of the building are problematic, in that they are "un-connected" to the rest of the site and to the buildings. Trying to resolve how to connect them especially how to include an ADA-compliant ramp there to reduce the steepness of the existing one and increase access. Ron noted those playfields are like "two different lands" compared to the rest of the complex. *Ideally*, we should try to integrate them, within the budget.

(Ron noted that with a little more money in the budget, he could add a big staircase to connect playfields with the rest of the space, and also “connect” the two sculptures currently onsite.)

Dan updated the group on the request to move the outdoor basketball courts to another location. It was agreed to wait and see what the Sonics do with the grant application; Dan threw out an idea that *possibly* there’s a way to upgrade and, at the *least*, (nicely) fence the existing b’ball courts and even connect the playfields visually, with extended fencing.

Ron passed out copies of 2 options for the building /interior spaces, plus a summary sheet showing square footage required in the Levy language vs. footage desired by constituents:

- Reviewing the summary sheet shows the differences between the sq. footage originally considered and the desires of the community. A difference of about 3,000 sq. feet.
- Much of this can be included, but there will be some trade-off and related decisions.
- To accommodate most of the “desired spaces”, some rooms have to be a bit smaller.
- “Vertical circulation” = barrier-free accessibility which is an ADA (Americans with Disabilities) requirement. This is a key element and is required in the design.
- Dan pointed out that seismic improvements are needed in the building that remains, which means removing the roof. Also fire sprinklers and other upgrades are needed. These can all be expensive.
- Ron said that to keep the existing gym and upgrade it, and add bleachers, is about half the cost of replacing it altogether. There will be an elevator (as well as stairs) going to the gym, and a new open space where teams can gather before or after games. It will hardly look like same gym, on completion, with other improvements including new energy-efficient windows and a yet to be determined new exterior surface
- Dan asked for other comments/questions about the gym—bleachers were asked about: approx. 120 ft. of bleachers are planned equating to space for about 60-80 people to sit.
- This directly affects number of parking spaces required; in this case there are ‘enough’ spaces per code – but code does not necessarily reflect reality. To improve the parking lot without expanding size, a “turnaround” is being added & traffic flow will be improved.
- A yet to be determined acoustical treatment is planned for the gym (bleachers will help cut down the noise also).
- In the new building, the plan is to have about 8-10 feet of floor to ceiling windows from the main level looking down into the gym.

Cheryl Fraser noted that the Jefferson Community Center’s new gym dedication and opening is on Saturday, Sept. 11 (10 a.m. – noon program time) and invited the PAT to attend, and take a look at the acoustical treatment used for that project.

- A comment on the kitchen is that the new one will be very similar to the one we saw at High Point CC, with stainless steel and commercial appliances, direct access to the child care room and multipurpose room.

Building design OPTION 1:

The main difference (vs. option 2) is the orientation of the multipurpose room and the front of the building's orientation to the parking lot. It also has **two** double 'front' doors (main entrances), at either end. The main-level showers will be harder to see by staff, also. The front entrance may not be as "obvious" for those driving up to the center.

OPTION 2: In this case, the front entrance is directly facing the parking lot. There is one double door front entrance, and one single door main entrance. The main-level showers are more easily visible to staff.

Comments by those present; most PAT members didn't have a clear preference except that Ed Rose preferred Option 1, for better sightlines. Pam Kliment preferred Option 2, for the reason that it makes it easier to see the front entrance as you drive up to the building. (A short discussion ensued about several options to consider making the entrance visually obvious.)

Other things of note --

Restrooms: **In both plans**, interior restrooms will be on the main level (vs. the current location downstairs). This will solve a number of existing problems, including inefficient plumbing and ongoing maintenance issues. The main level restrooms will also be more convenient to the child care room, multipurpose room and kitchen, as well as other program spaces and lobby.

Exterior restrooms appear on both plan options on the outside of the storage room attached to the multipurpose room, on the main level. This location works well for the play area, wading pool, and other exterior areas. It can also work for those occasions when the gym is being used, but the rest of the CC is closed.

Idea to consider: *Gym door:* Creating a barrier with air-flow, e.g. a mesh metal door, to use as a barrier between gym and the rest of the center. This separates the two spaces when the CC is closed, or the gym is closed or vice versa. *Teen/game rooms (#1 and #2):* **In both plans**, there are two teen/game rooms shown, one of which can be programmed as a fitness room or a computer room. The rooms are oriented somewhat differently in each plan.

Sightlines / visual access in the building: Ron and Ed Rose pointed out that sightlines, an important factor for CC staff, differ in Options 1 and 2. Clint feels the sightlines to the *exterior*

are less critical, since security cameras will be used. For the interior, he's aware that it would be ideal to be able to see most or all of the areas, including showers.

Reusing water onsite: Dan would like to research reusing the water from the wading pool and roof to flush toilets and irrigate landscaping. Doing this would be an extra cost initially.

A covered porch or deck for the multipurpose room: This would be ideal if the budget allows. It's something that's been described as a nice indoor space to look out, and could help in marketing the multipurpose room for public use/rental. Ron will look at this option, with a caveat that it would have a cost attached.

Ron concluded his presentation by saying that these design options represent "the dream" but the PAT, with public input, will have to help narrow it down to what fits the budget. We need to have some contingency plans in the event of rising construction costs (e.g. the price of steel has risen dramatically in the last year) or, other cost issues. We'll do our best to build to LEEDS (environmental) standards; however this may require discussion since it can increase costs.

Other discussion notes- The basketball courts location was briefly re-discussed; Ed said that SHA sees it as a priority to resolve the associated noise and behavior issues for the neighbors. Dan suggested that SHA Leadership take an on site meeting with Dan and Ron to talk about this. Dan commented that Ken is aware of this issue. The discussion ended with an agreement that Parks will do everything possible to fence the courts in their current location and work to reduce the behavioral problems.

Cheryl Fraser asked if locking the parking area (since May 5, with funding to do so until Sept. 5) has helped -- Jenny and Shirley agreed it has been quieter. Richard Endstadt, another resident on Frontenac, commented that the courts have never been a real problem for him personally. The conclusion: if the Sonics provide funds, we'll discuss at that time a specific plan for the basketball courts. The design of the building must move forward independently of a potential Sonics grant to stay on schedule. (Cheryl also noted that the closing time of the park is mandated by a City ordinance.)

8:05 p.m. Pam Kliment explained her role in helping other community groups to procure Department of Neighborhoods (DON) grant funds, for playground and play area enhancements. (For example, she started a group at Carkeek Park that ultimately raised money, and got matching funds, for an environmental education center.)

Pam typically works with community groups, once the groups have applied for, and received, either a "small and simple" grant for up to \$15K, or a large project grant of up to \$100K.

Parks staff (and SHA staff) cannot participate in the application process, and the community group, which can be pretty “ad hoc” or informal, has to meet certain requirements.

- The next small and simple grant application deadline is in October, 2004.
- Pam suggests artwork related to the play area as a request, or with a larger request, replacing equipment might be possible.
- Involving the already-hired landscape architect for the project would be another idea.
- Asking the artist for this project (Aaron Powers) for input is a possible option.
- Excellent way to involve parents and kids, by asking them to “do play area” research and visit other parks to see what they like or don’t like.
- If this application is made and granted, it’s important to coordinate the group’s ideas and plans with the project designs and plans.
- Monika Christine Mathews offered to be part of this group, which needs more members.

8:25 p.m. Joy Moro (SHA) announced the **New Holly Family Fun Fest at VACC, Saturday August 14, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.** and passed out a flyer. The PAT agreed it’s important to promote the upcoming public meeting to the community at that event. Parks will have a table at the fun fest to promote the Aug. 17 meeting, staffed by Karen Lynch, Dan Johnson and Ron Wright, who will display project design options. (11 a.m. – 2 p.m.) Monika Christine offered to staff a table, also, to explain the “Friends of Van Asselt Playground” community group idea and sign up parents or interested community members to help seek the grant funds Pam Kliment described.

Next steps: Ron will work to flesh out the design options, and Karen will prepare to advertise the public meeting on Aug. 17. Meeting materials will be translated into: Somali; Cantonese; Vietnamese; Cambodian; and Amharic. (We may be able to offer child care as well.)

8:40 p.m. Adjourned

Minutes are posted on the project’s web page:

http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/Centers/current/Van_Asselt_Community_Center.htm

Next PAT Meeting / Public Meeting

Tuesday, August 17, 6:30 – 9:00

(6:30- 7 p.m.: view design options. Meeting starts promptly at 7:00)

Van Asselt Community Center Gym (PAT meeting #6)